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Empowerment: The Challenge for Thai hotel industry

Rugee Thuayngarm

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Empowerment: The Challenge for Thai Hotel Industry

By

Rugee Thuayngarm

A project submitted to the

Faculty of the School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management

At

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of

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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management
Department of Graduate Studies

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I dedicate my master to you all.

Empowerment: The Challenge for Thai Hotel Industry

Rugee Thuayngarm

Abstract

This research study is conducting to evaluate the degree of assessment of the empowerment concept at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit is a green-site hotel for the empowerment concept, which means that the hotel has been operated under empowerment since the hotel was first operated in 1996. It claims to be the first hotel in Thailand employing this concept.

The research study carries out opinion and perceptions of front-line service staffs on the actual empowerment practice at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel in three main departments: Front Office, Food and Beverage, and Housekeeping. This will be beneficial for the management in assessing the current hotel operation under the empowerment concept, which will lead to improvement process for full advantage in employing this concept.

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Chapter I

Introduction & Statement of the Study

Introduction

There is no doubt that today's organizations are faced with unprecedented change and challenge – challenge to work in new ways, to do more with less, to break old paradigms and “think outside the box”, to take risks. More than ever before, organizations need the power of vision to unite and inspire their people during uncertainty and change. They must foster cooperation and collaboration in an increasingly diverse and competitive environment. Organizations must be fluid to respond quickly to change; they must break down barriers that block creativity and innovation. (HRD Press, 1997)

In order to ensure growth and survival in today's business, organizations have to develop new and unique approaches to attract and retain customers. Also, the hotel business in Thailand has been increasing with high competition since 1990s. This makes owners and management levels try to improve and differentiate their service from competitors. Running the hotel business, we provide service as main product. And by its nature, service is intangible. Therefore, how to grasp customers attention, best serve their needs and become the number one in their minds turn to be the key factors in running business. Each hotel tries to acquire new challenging strategies not only to better meet and exceed customer expectations but also to better achieve financial results.

Some hotels in Thailand began restructuring their organizations and the empowerment concept becomes one of the great solutions getting involved. With the traditional hotel management concept, staffs are relying more on their supervisors, and do only what they are told to do. Many times, this causes the delay in providing service to customers.

By its meaning, empowerment is a management concept decentralizing the decision making to lower organizational levels. If this management concept can be successfully developed in Thai hotel business, I hope that it will help providing better and faster service so as to best satisfy customers. In addition, it will help moving hotel management concept in Thailand to one further step and help increasing service standard in Thai hotel industry. Unfortunately, because empowerment is so frequently misunderstood and, therefore, misapplied in organizations, not every hotel will be able to implement it successfully. Some are most likely in trial and error stage spending a lot of money, time, energy, and resources with doubt whether this strategy is appropriate for their properties.

Problem Statement

Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel has been practiced the empowerment concept since it was first operated in 1996.

What kind of environment they need to create and what kind of behavior needed to be changed so as to be successful in doing it? What are the critical factors that front-

line service staffs consider important to have for being empowered and in which areas they conceive should be improved for being more empowered?

Background

Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel is a green-site hotel for the empowerment concept, which means that empowerment is applied as management style of the hotel since it was first operated in 1996. The Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel claims to be the first hotel in Thailand which implements this concept.

During three months period before the hotel would be operated, employees were first trained about empowerment, multiskilling, as well as standard and procedure of the hotel and their own departments. Each department had separate training programs for its employees with a close guidance from human resources department.

Outside professional trainers from Australian Hospitality Institution also played an important role. They worked closely with human resources department and management in each department in creating the most suitable training program for each individual department.

The level of empowerment at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel varies from department to department. Front Office department seems to employ a higher level of empowerment in day to day operation than the other two departments do. As they clearly state in their mission statement “We will empower ourselves to deliver exemplary

customer service.”, management strongly believe and rigidly apply empowerment concept in routine work in Front Office area.

Purpose

The purpose of the study is to analyze how well Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel has been operated under the empowerment concept. Ideas, opinions and perceptions from employees about the operation will give a guidance for the owners and managers of the hotel to consider how they should improve their operation in order to most benefit their employees, property, and as a result, to most benefit their customers.

Significance of Study

As the hotel industry in Thailand expands, it will be challenging for management to discover new strategies that will enhance customer service, and increase profitability for the organization. Empowerment seems very successful in Western countries; therefore the Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel has been trying to implement the empowerment concept in the day to day operation to improve and ensure service standard.

As front-line employees are the key persons in practicing the empowerment concept, their opinions and perceptions about the operation are valuable for the evaluation of the current performance.

I do hope my study will be beneficial for the hotel, particularly the management level, to recognize how their employees think about the operation, so that they can base the finding of my study to serve as a guidance on how, and in which areas the operation should be improved. The results would be better performance in employing the empowerment concept in the organization.

Methodology

The research study will concentrate on present perspectives. The descriptive research will be used to illustrate the performance of Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel, which is now using the empowerment concept. It will carry out front-line service staff opinions and perceptions about the hotel current operation on thirteen key elements for successful implementation of empowerment concept, which are Goals, Roles, Training, Resources, Trust, Authority, Management Support, Participation, Feedback, Recognition, Relationship Between Management and Staffs, Relationship among Staffs in the same Department, and Relationship among Staffs from Different Departments.

Literature Review

Topics that will be reviewed will include: Empowerment Concept, Barriers in Developing Empowerment Concept, Cross-Cultural Transfer of Management, Customer Satisfaction, and Thai Cultural Structure.

Sources will include industry journals, as well as those involving Empowered Management, Barriers to Empowerment. A text book review will include authors Jane

Smith, Richard S. Wellins, William C. Byham, Jeanne M. Wilson, Karl Albrecht, and so on.

Hypothesis

I believe the study will show that applying the empowerment concept in Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel requires some further steps for improvement to better suit employees' preferences. There will be many factors needed to be changed and created so as to get the full benefit in implementing this concept.

Definition of Terms

Cross-cultural transfer of management: is transferring management concept from one country to another where there are different environment and background.

Customs and Cultural Structure: is the integrated pattern of beliefs, social forms and material traits of racial, religious, or social group.

Empowerment: is defined as the redistribution of power within an organization that enables managers, supervisors, and employees to perform their jobs more efficiently and effectively. The overall goal of empowerment is to enhance customer service and increase profits to the organization by releasing decision-making responsibility, authority and accountability to the lowest levels within the organization. (Woods and King, 1996)

Moment of Truth: is every single moment that customers come into contact with and have experiences with the organization.

Strategy: is a careful plan or method appears to serve an important function in achieving goal or evolutionary success.

Assumption

I will assume that management level of Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel will be able to consider how they should improve their current operation in order to be successful in applying empowerment concept in their organization by determining the evidence from the survey. They will clearly understand how front-line service staffs experience and perceive the way management operate the hotel under the empowerment concept. The most important point, they will get some ideas from their own employees in order to create better environment for empowerment.

Scope and Limitations

As no rules, best practices, or secret formulas exist that ensure high-performance outcomes for empowerment, management who follow the evidence carried out from the study to improve the hotel operation may not always achieve the best result. There still be any other important factors to be taken to consideration. Cultural structure can be one of those important factors. Cultural structure differs from country to country, or even from organization to organization.

This study is attempting to analyze and convey opinions and perceptions about the empowered-operation at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel from front line employees to management level so that the management will better understand what their internal customers need more for being empowered.

Procedures

The population for this study will be the Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit hotel, Bangkok. The sample will be 50% of the total number of hotel front line service staffs, who create every single moment of truth with customers, from Front Office Department, Food and Beverage Department, and Housekeeping Department. Data collection will be done by questionnaires. Personal interview will also be done.

The purpose of the survey is to determine the level of assessment in key elements for successful implementation of empowerment at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel.

Long Range Consequences

Should the findings of this study be in accordance with the hypothesis, the management level will get broader picture how empowerment works and should be managed. Which areas are needed to be improved in order to effectively apply this concept at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel? This will be helpful in making better decision and better planning in employing this strategy in the hotel. They will gain more information to contemplate what and how things needed to be differently managed in applying empowerment to meet their employees' needs.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Service Management, as Karl Albrecht has stated in the At America's Service (1992), is a total organizational approach that make quality of service, as perceived by the customer, the number one driving force for the operation of the business. The service management philosophy suggests that everybody in the organization has a part to play in making sure things turn out right for the customer.

The Service Triangle

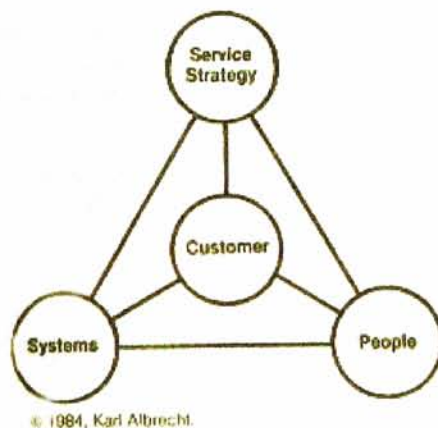


Figure 1. The Service Triangle

After many investigations and discussion with executives of excellent service companies, Albrecht have created the service triangle as a way of describing the operations of successful service business. Three major characteristics of the model are:

1. A vision, or strategy for the service product.
2. Customer-oriented front-line people.
3. Customer-friendly systems.

A Well-Conceived Strategy for Service. The outstanding organizations have discovered, invented, or evolved a unifying idea about what they do. Service concept, or service strategy, directs the attention of the people in the organization toward the real priorities of the customer.

Customer-Oriented Front-Line People. Managers of such organizations have encouraged and helped the people who deliver the service to keep their attention fastened on the needs of the customer. The effective front-line person is able to maintain an “otherworldly” focus of attention by tuning in to the customer’s current situation, frame of mind, and need. This leads to a level of the service as superior in the customer’s mind.

Customer-Friendly Systems. The delivery system that backs up the service people is truly designed for the convenience of the customer rather than the convenience of the organization.

In achieving the highest customer-driven performance, all key characteristics in the Service Triangle should be supporting one another.

Achieving success amidst the constant demands and the uncertainties of today's world often seems like a massive task. It is the time we need to work in new ways-to break old paradigms and think outside the box. And it is one that no one can hope to carry through without the full co-operation and enthusiasm of staff at all levels of the organization.

The philosophy of empowerment recognizes that nobody knows a job better than the person doing it, and that most people want to be involved and take a pride of being ownership in the work that they do.

As you can see from the service triangle model, front-line people is one of the key elements. It is significant to empower people closest the problem to solve the problems for the benefit of customers. It is to motivate front line people to do what they need to do, by considering what is the best for customers, rather than to do what they are told to do.

Levels of Empowerment

Donald C. Mosley, Leon C Megginson, and Paul H. Pietri have noted in Supervisory Management: The Art of Empowering and Developing People (1997) about four levels of empowerment: 1. Traditional Management 2. Suggestion Involvement 3. Job Level Involvement 4. Full Empowerment.

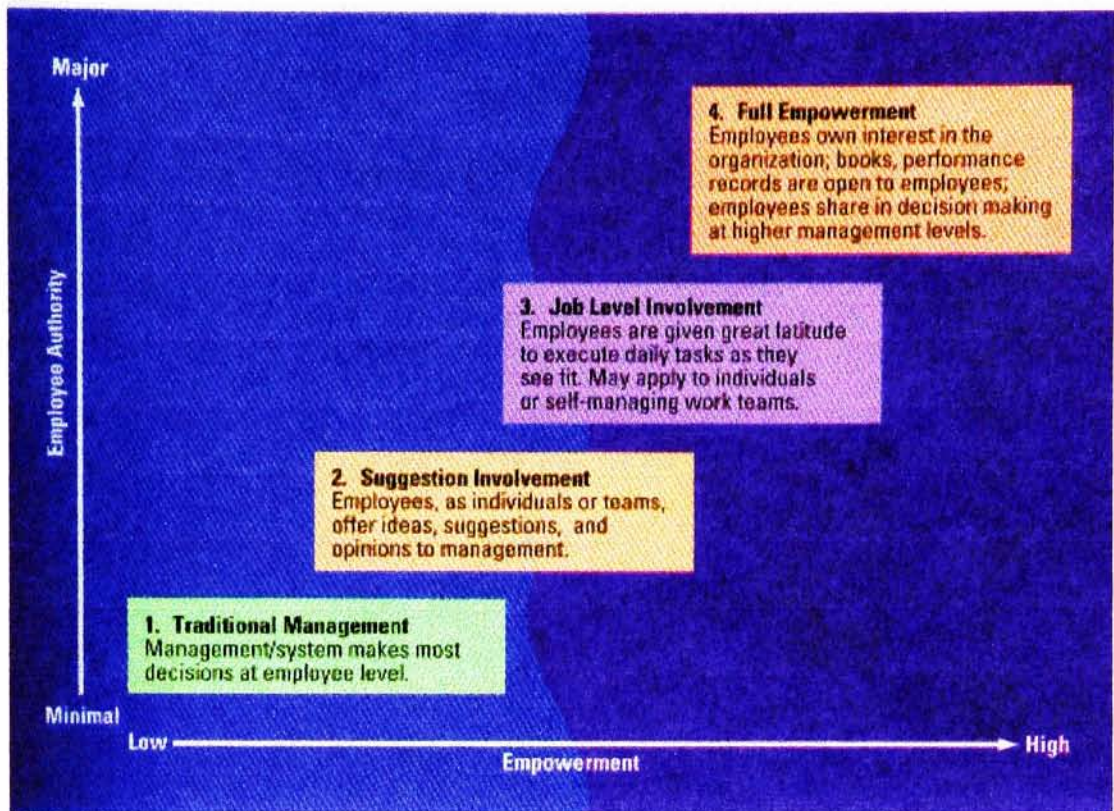


Figure 2. Levels of Empowerment

Traditional Management

There is minimal empowerment exists in this level. Major decision-making authority rests outside the control of employees. The worker's task is to complete the job as required; he or she can do little to influence the outcome.

Suggestion Involvement

At this level, employees are actively encouraged to make suggestions to improve aspects of their work or to determine their opinion about tentative changes in the way work is conducted. This level of involvement does not change the fact that

management or the system, rather than employees, exercises true control over the primary work decisions that determine what is to be done and how to do it. The narrow job duties may remain, but some empowerment occurs through the suggestion process.

Job Involvement

In job involvement, jobs are defined so that employees use a broad variety of skills and control the work content of their jobs. There are several conditions necessary for individuals to become truly empowered at this level. These include the following:

1. Having self-confidence to perform the job well. To be empowered, employees must feel that they have the skills and abilities to successfully perform their work.
2. Being able to make work choices. A condition of empowerment is that employees have significant latitude in determining how their work is performed. Often these choices include decisions about what, how, and when the work is done, as well as how work problems are handled.
3. Believing the work is meaningful. Empowered employees feel that their work has purpose and value. They feel that their extra effort and initiative contributes in an important rather than trivial way.
4. Feeling that individual effort can make a difference. Truly empowered employees feel that they can personally impact job outcomes. The decisions

that they make about their jobs largely determine whether the job results are a success or failure.

5. Knowing there is management support. Since empowered employees take risks in assuming responsibility, they must trust their own supervisors and higher managers to back them up.

Full Empowerment

In a full empowerment organization, the total organization is involved. The organization's performance information is openly shared and made available to all employees. Employees are highly skilled in teamwork and problem-solving techniques and actively participate in work unit and higher-level management decisions.

Empowerment is an extremely effective tool for developing both people and organizations. It is a vital element of the modern business environment. Getting closer to the customer, improving service delivery, continuous innovation, increased productivity, gaining the competitive edge.

Jane Smith has mentioned in *Empowering People: How to bring out the best in your workforce* (1996) that empowerment becomes necessary because the external environment has changed and the people themselves also have changed.

Business organizations in the 1990s operate in a world of uncertainty, complexity and unpredictable change. You are probably well aware of the main factors that have brought this situation about:

- Intensifying competition

All businesses are to a greater or lesser extent influenced and affected by the competitive environment. Organizations need empowered people to help them fight off the competitive threat.

- Rapid technological innovation

Any business that wishes to survive in a changing world must keep abreast of the technology applicable to its products and services and to its methods of operation. To do otherwise is to risk destruction as competitors take advantage of new developments. Most companies now use computer systems to help them gather, process, store and use information more efficiently. Many also use them as the basis of entirely new manufacturing processes or services. During the 1980s and 1990s, business information systems have created new business possibilities, improved general efficiency and have frequently resulted in substantial cost savings.

Organizations need empowered people to make the best use of advanced technology.

- Constant demand for higher quality and better value

Many organizations recognize that, in the face of increasing competition, they have to continuously improve the quality of service they provide for customers. This means finding out what customers want in the first place and

then improving on this. When several companies are competing in the same market for the business of the same customers, service is often the most important way of gaining the competitive edge. Organizations need empowered people to find innovative ways of improving their products and services.

For a long time, managers have been saying that people are their most valuable resource, but until recently few seem to have acted on this assertion. At last it is dawning on organizations that their present security and future success depend more on the talent and wit of their people than on their land, their buildings, their plant and their equipment. Employees have truly become the “intellectual capital” of the organization. (Smith,1996)

In his book, *The Empty Raincoat*, Charles Handy notes that focused intelligence, the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and know-how, is the new source of wealth. The traditional sources of wealth – land, raw materials, technology, even unskilled labor – can all be bought in as and when they are needed. What you can't do without is the people who have the ability to use all of these to the best advantage. Material resources cannot by themselves improve service quality, they cannot generate innovative ideas, they cannot push the organization to new performance levels. The goal of empowerment is to harness the brains of our people, rather than simply their brawn.

Another aspect of change is that working people today are very different from those in employment in the early and middle years of the twentieth century. Traditional

“blue collar” workers now form a minority of the workforce, most workers do jobs that demand far more of them than simple manual labor, and those that are involved in unskilled work have higher expectations than their predecessors.

Sheila Kessler has also cited in the book, *Total Quality Service: A Simplified Approach to Using the Baldrige Award Criteria* (1995), “Company that empower employees as part of their overall quality management effort are twice as likely as other firms to report significant product or service improvement.”

Everybody talks about empowerment these days and many company leaders claim to be practicing it, somehow, there is a great number of managers and employees who do not really understand what empowerment involves. (Pastor, 1997)

Jim Cathcart has recommended eight T's of Empowerment Checklist for determining how to empower or motivate someone by identifying employees who will be empowered and then ask the eight questions to determine what kind of empowerment would be the most effective.

- *Target* – Do employees understand and accept the purpose or goal?
- *Tools* – Do employees have the tools, or information needed to do the job?
- *Training* – Has there been enough training in how to use the tools well?
- *Time* – Have they had enough time for the training to take effect?
- *Truth* – Do employees know how all of this fits together?

- *Tracking* – Is management providing the feedback needed for them to stay on track?
- *Touch* – Is there enough support and encouragement?
- *Trust* – Do management trust employees appropriately for their skill and mastery level?

The Empowerment Game Plan

Drawing on ten years of research and consultation with a wide variety of companies, Ken Blanchard, John P. Carlos and Alan Randolph, the authors of *Empowerment Takes More Than a Minute* (1996), has defined three essential keys for achieving true empowerment:

1. Share information with everyone
2. Create autonomy through boundaries
3. Replace hierarchical thinking with self-managed teams

The authors summarize the three keys to empowerment and use arrows to show the interplay that is needed among all three in the empowerment game plan.

THE EMPOWERMENT GAME PLAN

Start with—

Sharing Information with Everyone

- Share performance information about the company; help people understand the business.
- Build trust through sharing.
- Set up self-monitoring possibilities.
- View mistakes as learning opportunities.
- Break down hierarchical thinking; help people behave as owners.

Then

Create Autonomy through Boundaries

- Clarify the big and little pictures.
- Clarify goals and roles.
- Define values and rules that underlie actions.
- Create rules and procedures that support empowerment.
- Provide needed training.
- Hold people accountable for results.

And

Replace the Old Hierarchy with Self-Directed Teams

- Provide direction and skills training for empowered teams.
- Provide support and encouragement for change.
- Use diversity as a team asset.
- Gradually give control to the teams.
- Recognize there will be some tough times.

Figure 3. The Empowerment Game Plan

Organizations often fail to improve because managers, who have the authority to make changes, are unaware of the problems, while people on the front line, who know what the problems are, have no authority to do anything about them. It is too common for

businesses to pay consultants a large amount to tell them how to improve work processes, when their staff could have provided much of the same information for nothing. (Smith, 1996)

The traditional way of managing has emphasized the control and direction of people and the maintenance of discipline. The old-style manager clings firmly to the belief that if you give them an inch they will take a mile. Such managers have a profound effect on the way their people behave. Rather than focusing on improving services or getting closer to the customer's needs, their subordinates' primary objectives tend to be pleasing the boss and keeping out of trouble.

To empower others, managers have to trust their people's abilities and commitment. To commit themselves and to take on ownership of the organization's goals, people must be able to trust and respect their managers. And before any of this can happen, managers have to believe that empowerment is both possible and beneficial. However, many managers are concerned that to empower is to lose control and to invite chaos.

Chapter III

Methodology

In this study, the Likert-type format is used in designing the questionnaire (Appendix C). Likert-type response format, developed by R.A. Likert (1932) allows front-line staffs to respond in varying degrees to each item. The low end represents a negative response (Strongly Disagree) while the high end represents a positive response (Strongly Agree).

The questionnaire allows front line service staffs to evaluate the level of assessment of thirteen key elements for successful implementation of empowerment within their own departments. Those key elements, which include *Goals, Roles, Training, Resources, Trust, Authority, Management Support, Participation, Feedback, Recognition, Relationship Between Management and Staffs, Relationship among Staffs in the same Department, and Relationship among Staffs from Different Departments*, are gathered from many readings about the empowerment concept from both published books and journals.

The responses were obtained from 118 front-line service staffs in three main departments: Front Office, Food and Beverage, and Housekeeping. Fifty percent of the total number of front line service staffs in each department (29 Front Office Staffs out of 58, 52 Food and Beverage Staffs out of 104, and 37 Housekeepers out of 74), were the sample in this research study.

The raw scores for each single element would be calculated for the average values separated by department. The average values would finally represent the degree of assessment for the department as a whole, which would be used for the analysis.

Chapter IV

Results and Findings

Table 1

The degree of assessment of key elements in successful implementation of empowerment.

1 – Strongly Disagree 2 – Disagree 3 – Neutral 4 – Agree 5 – Strongly Agree

Key Elements	Department		
	Front Office	F&B	Housekeeping
Goals	4.00	3.88	4.00
Roles	3.90	3.87	4.14
Training	3.69	3.63	3.73
Resources	3.52	3.37	3.81
Trust	3.62	3.62	2.78
Authority	3.72	3.65	2.89
Management Support	3.76	3.52	2.78
Participation	4.07	3.19	2.43
Feedback	3.41	3.60	3.65
Recognition	3.69	3.48	3.78
Relationship Between Management and Staff	3.48	3.56	3.05
Relationship Among Staff In The Same Departments	4.41	4.27	4.41
Relationship Among Staff In Different Departments	3.45	3.65	3.24

* This survey is conducted through 50% of the total number of front-line service staffs from three main departments:

29 Front Office staffs, 52 Food&Beverage service staffs, and 37 Housekeepers.

***Goals** – Employees clearly understand and accept the purpose and goal of both department and hotel.

Roles – Employees are clear about what are expected from them.

Training – Has there been enough training in how to perform the job and how to use resources.

Resources – Employees have the equipment or information needed to do the job.

Trust – Employees are trusted that they can do the job and make decision without supervision.

Authority – Employees have the right to make decisions and take actions for customer satisfaction.

Management Support – Management actively supports and encourages employees.

Participation – Employees have opportunities to participate and show their ideas and opinions about the operation.

Feedback – Feedback is provided to employees in order to stay on track.

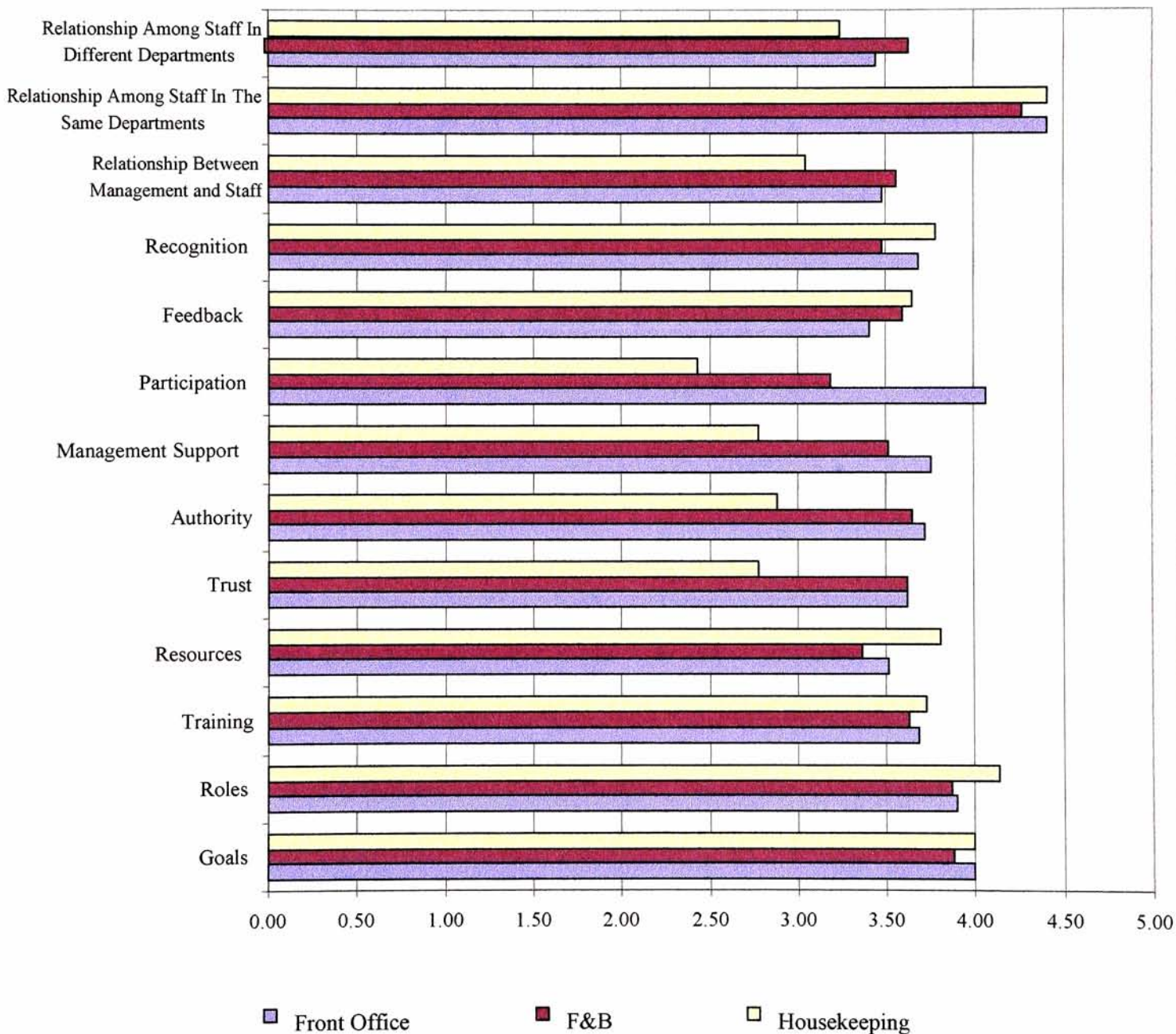
Recognition – Employees receive appropriate recognition for their contributions and efforts.

Relationships - Management encourages relationship between management and employees.
 - Management encourages relationship among members in the same department.
 - Management encourages relationship among employees in different departments.

Refer to Appendix C for full detail of questionnaire.

Graph 1

The Comparison of the Key Elements for Successful Implementation of Empowerment by Departments



Front Office front line service staffs give mostly above average scores on each key element. The highest score of level of assessment is in the *Relationship among staff in the same department* area. However, the first three lowest scores are on *Feedback*, *Relationship between management and staff* and *Resources* accordingly.

Food and Beverage front line service staffs also give above average scores. Somehow, almost all scores are below 4.0, except on the area of *Relationship among staff in the same department*, which is remarkably as high as 4.27, comparing to other areas.

Although **Housekeeping** front line service staffs also give the highest score of 4.41 on the area of *Relationship among staff in the same department*, the very extremely low-score areas are in four main elements; *Trust*, *Authority*, *Management Support*, and *Participation*.

Chapter V

Conclusion and Research Implimentation

The research evidence shows that the level of assessment of empowerment in Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel differs from department to department. The general conclusion indicates that empowerment is not working to full advantage for the hotel.

All three departments obtain rather close level in most key elements for successful implementation of empowerment. The most significant differences fall into four areas: *Trust, Authority, Management Support, and Participation*. Housekeeping gain very low levels in all these four elements, while Front Office and Food and Beverage departments get somewhat close, except in the area of *Participation*, where Front Office reach remarkably high level.

Since the workforce is so diverse, empowerment are better suited some employees than others. Therefore, levels of empowerment should be varied relying on nature of work, level of education and knowledge of employees, skills and abilities to effectively use empowerment, and also the readiness of each individual front-line service staffs to be empowered.

The art of good management is to determine what degree of empowerment to extend to different employees. The greatest challenge for managers is to carefully assess themselves, their organizations, and their employees.

Empowerment needs to be originated from the top, or it goes nowhere. Are managers ready to give up decision-making authority and pass those powers they used to have to front-line people? Or are they distrustful of their subordinates? Trust and support from owner and management at all levels is critical.

Though it is clearly stated in the standard and procedure of the hotel about the management style at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit (Appendix B), it will be only the beautiful words which are written down on the paper if there is no real practice in the routine operation.

Next, are employees ready or willing to participate in empowerment program or are they disinterested in the organization in general and their own job in particular?

As empowerment means front line people have freedom to act for the benefit of customers, it also means they have to take more responsibilities and be more accountable for the results. Some employees want to move on into the further step, but some would prefer to stay in the old accustomed one by taking no risks.

The cultural structure of Thai people is one of the very important factors. As Thai culture is different from the Western's, the success of cross-cultural transfer of management approaches and organizational techniques is varied. Thais are taught to respect elders since very early age. They are aware of their positions in the family

hierarchy, a distinction that applies not only to the relationship between parents and children but also to that between siblings of different ages. This same delineation of roles also applies to the wider world outside the family and will remain deeply ingrained throughout life, thus explaining the reluctance of younger Thais to oppose or otherwise confront a senior during their subsequent careers in business and government.

The same in their career path, Thais do strongly believe in hierarchy management. They pay respect to the persons in higher levels. Whatever decisions in the organization are mostly from the higher positions and do what they are told to do. Doing anything without asking or reporting means no respect. Therefore, applying any cross-cultural management strategy in Thailand should carefully consider about Thai culture.

The evidence also shows about average score on *Training* area for all departments. Front line people will never be effectively empowered if they do not have or are not trained to have skills and abilities needed to be empowered. Somehow, each individual person is unique. Each person requires different length of time for learning and being trained.

Also, with the standard score on *Resource*, which includes equipment and information needed to do the jobs, front line people without necessary resources will never be able to act responsibly. One most important key for empowerment is to share information with everyone. With no sufficient information in performing the job, there will be no confidence in carrying out power.

Feedback on current performance will help employees keeping the right track on how they should perform their jobs. Moreover, it also leads to the improvement process for better performance in the future.

Reward and recognition is a vital key for motivating and driving employees to constantly carry out good performance with no necessary control from supervisors.

Lastly, good relationship in all levels in the organization generates mutual benefits for customers, employees, and ultimately, for the organization as a whole.

No matter what level of empowerment the hotel is employing, the most important thing the management should considerably care about is to take a good care of employees, so that they can take a good care of customers.

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Appendix A:

The Overview of Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel.

Overview of Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel

Location

Located in fashionable midtown Sukhumvit, the luxurious Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit is the only genuine 5-star hotel in this vibrant commercial and residential area of Bangkok. The majestic thirty-storey tower offers dramatic views over the city and nearby Lake Rachada; while the distinctive three-storey podium that fronts the hotel, stands in stark contrast to the hustle and bustle of the street outside. (Sukhumvit Road runs all the way to Cambodia and is one of the city's most famous thoroughfares.)

Inside, the coolly elegant interior of the marble lobby, with its high ceiling and unique stone carvings and waterborne Thai sculptures, provides a haven of tranquillity. The Central Business District is just 3 kilometres from the hotel, but many companies, who moved offices during the early nineties, are now located in the immediate area of Asoke, Lard Phrao, Rachadapisek and eastern Sukhumvit.

The hotel offers easy access to some of the city's best shopping and entertainment. Designer boutiques and a major department store are within easy walking distance, and the shopping centre of Siam Square is a short taxi ride away.

The Sukhumvit area also has some of the city's most interesting clubs, pubs, and restaurants.

Transportation

Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit is 26 kilometres from Bangkok's Don Muang International Airport via the elevated expressway and Don Muang toll way. The average door-to-door time is 25 minutes. The hotel offers a 24-hour meeting service at the airport and transportation is by limousine or air-conditioned taxi. For travel within the city, public taxis and limousine services are available.

Rooms and Suites

445 spacious, studio-style guest rooms, including 21 Executive Suites overlooking Lake Rachada, 3 Specialty Suites and 2 Thai Theme Suites. All have 24-hour butler service. The standard guest rooms are 45 square metres in size and feature rich woods, marble, and sumptuous Thai silks, to give an elegant, international flavour and yet retain a special Thai touch.

Each room has a private bathroom with separate bath and shower, "walk-in" wardrobe, individually controlled air conditioning, remote-control colour television with in-house movie channels, compact disc player and tape, selected AM/FM radio, alarm clock, IDD telephones with 2 lines and conference call facilities, bar with refrigerator, 220-240V AC power with connections for fax and personal computers, and a deluxe range of bathroom toiletries. Bathrooms have IDD telephones.

Executive Suites also incorporate a large living/lounge area with separate washroom and toilet. Each Executive Suite is approximately 83 square metres. Special accommodation for disabled guests is also available.

Restaurants

Ristorante Rossini

Adjacent to the Library on the third floor, this is Bangkok's finest Italian restaurant. A splendidly informal, yet civilized place, with a Bistro-like atmosphere the Ristorante offers cuisine from the coastal regions of southern Italy. From grillards of fresh seafood and meats to creative pastas and pizzas, our Italian chef ensures that everything is authentically...Italianissimo.

Orchid Cafe

An all-day-dining restaurant open daily for breakfast, lunch, dinner or just a snack. Located off the main lobby, the Orchid Cafe offers à la carte menus as well as sumptuous international buffets.

Golden Lotus

Contemporary in design, this elegantly-appointed Chinese restaurant serves authentic cuisine from southern

China, prepared by Hong Kong chefs. In addition to an extensive à la carte menu, a special Dim Sum menu is available at lunch. For intimate dining, 6 private rooms are also available.

Riva's

The place to be seen in Sukhumvit for lunch, after-work drinks, dinner and late night entertainment, this quality brasserie has no equal. Cuisine is an eclectic mix of the best of California, with influences of Oriental culture in both presentation and service. A sophisticated, yet fun experience, with live music six nights a week.

The Grande Spa & Fitness Club

The Grande Spa & Fitness Club, located on the sixth floor, is staffed by fully-qualified fitness instructors and therapists. The Club features 11 treatment rooms (including a Guerlain Room), Gymnasium, Aerobics Studio, Swimming Pool, Jacuzzi, Saunas, Steam Rooms, Juice Bar, and of course, Male and Female Locker Rooms. Guests can have personal one-on-one training, follow their own programs, or join any of the upbeat aerobics classes.

Conference & Banqueting

Facilities

Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit is just minutes away from Thailand's largest conference center, the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, venue for the 46th World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings in 1991. (The main hall can accommodate up to 7,000 people.)

However, for slightly smaller conferences and banquets the hotel boasts its own unique facilities, most with natural daylight. Seven function rooms are located on the 4th floor of the Podium, offering direct access to the carpark.

The entire conference and banqueting floor is self-contained and has its own full-time staff. Two elegant boardrooms have fixed boardroom tables and a seating capacity of 12 persons per room. The hotel's Business Center also incorporates a similar boardroom, plus two private offices.

The Grande Ballroom

Opulent in design and fully equipped, this 450 square metre room has a maximum capacity of 500 for cocktails, 480 theatre style, and 350 for banquets.

The Sukhumvit Room

140 square metres, this light and airy room can comfortably accommodate 150 theatre style and 100 for banquets.

Asoke Rooms 1 + 2

These smaller, more intimate function rooms of 85 square metres have a maximum capacity of 95 theatre style and 55 for dinner.

Services and Facilities

The Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit is totally committed to excellence and guest satisfaction, which is why the hotel is a member of the exclusive ITT Sheraton Luxury Collection. The following are just some of the many superlative services offered: Express check-in.

- 24-hour butler service.
- Concierge services.
- 24-hour medical and dental services.
- Same day laundry & dry cleaning.
- Complimentary newspapers.
- Limousine service.
- Foreign currency exchange.
- Private library, for guests only.
- 24-hour Business Center.

Appendix B:

The Overview of Management Style at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel.

Management Style

Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel has been designed to be elegant, efficient and to enable all operating departments to be both profitable and to provide a high standard of service to customers. From an organizational point of view, the hotel will be positioned at the top end of the market. All facilities and services are equivalent, at minimum, to the best in Bangkok and South East Asia.

Senior executives will be competent and professional, both as individuals and members of the Executive Committee. Individual excellence will not be effective unless it also contributes to the collective excellence of the management team. Senior executives will be expected to lead by example.

The Executive Committee will be the key vehicle by which the senior managers contribute to the success of the hotel. The committee will strive to achieve consensus decisions, which are acceptable to all members and yet are decisions that do not require excessive compromise on the part of one or more individuals. However, the final responsibility for decisions rests with each executive and the committee will not be used to delay decisions or to justify wrong decisions. Ability to contribute to the Executive Committee will be an important factor in the assessment of performance.

Senior management will represent management opinions to the line staff and therefore are critical to the two-way flow of information which will be necessary to create

the environment of mutual trust and respect which in turn will be critical to the creation of the right service culture for the hotel.

Shift Leaders and front line staff are the “torch bearers” of the service culture which the hotel will strive to present consistently to its customers. They will be carefully selected and trained, and then given the right tools to do the job. As senior and middle management numbers will be kept to a minimum, front line staff will carry more responsibility and authority than has traditionally been the case in the industry. It is a key responsibility of senior management to ensure that shift leaders and front line staff are, by attitude, personality, and training, competent to accept this expanded role.

The concept of “Who is my customer?” will be strongly developed; senior management will be expected to regard their subordinates as their customers, and back-of-house staff will be encouraged to take the same attitude to front-of-house staff. This concept of customers will help to support the service culture the hotel is aiming to implement.

A successful Manager is one who:

- leads by example
- by the way he/she presents a concept, persuades others to accept that concept
- is able to think logically
- encourages staff to share their thoughts, ideas and opinions
- is able to act as a facilitator when necessary
- acts as a catalyst to make things happen

- is approachable
- sets future goals for himself/herself
- trains team players
- delegates effectively and encourages initiative
- puts his/her subordinates at ease
- appears fair in his/her judgements
- follows up immediately
- improves the operations of his/her department
- works hard
- produces profits and contains costs
- promotes teamwork

At all levels of the organization, the key to an employee's success will be **friendliness, helpfulness** and **efficiency**. Other attributes of a successful employee will be:

- concern for guests and staff
- enthusiasm
- a positive attitude towards customer service
- willing to learn
- co-operative, both within his/her department and with employees of other departments
- deriving satisfaction from doing a job well
- prepared to go the extra mile

- good product knowledge
- applying the principles and practices of Sheraton Guest Satisfaction Standard and empowerment
- ability to use customers names and to always give their own when answering the phone

In keeping with the trend to provide better profits for owners the organization will have a minimum of management staff. There will be no supervisors in the traditional sense of a layer of management, as supervision will be exercised by team leaders. In addition, the hotel will aim to train its front-line staff to take more responsibility, both in terms of decisions making and of being capable of handling one or more additional roles. Multi-skilling will be a key instrument in improving productivity and creating better career paths for employees. The result will be a “flat” organization, with a maximum of two layers of management between the front-line staff and the Executive Committee.

Appendix C:

Survey of the assessment of key elements for successful implementation of empowerment.

In order to create better empowered-working environment in Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel to benefit all staffs, we would like to get your valuable opinions on the following key elements on the implication of empowerment within your department. Please rate the degree of assessment through these elements based on your experiences.

The degree of assessment:

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neutral

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly Agree

Element	Assessment					Comment
	Disagree - Strongly Agree					
Goals Employees clearly understand and accept the purpose or goal of both department and hotel.	1	2	3	4	5	
Roles Employees are clear about what are expected from them.	1	2	3	4	5	
Training Has there been enough training in how to perform the job and how to use resources.	1	2	3	4	5	
Resources Employees have the equipment or information needed to do the job.	1	2	3	4	5	
Trust Employees are trusted that they can do the job and make decision without supervision.	1	2	3	4	5	
Authority Employees have the right to make decisions and take actions for customer satisfaction.	1	2	3	4	5	
Management Support Management actively supports and encourages employees.	1	2	3	4	5	
Participation Employees have opportunities to participate and show their ideas and opinions about the operation.	1	2	3	4	5	

<i>Component</i>	<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Comment</i>
	Disagree - Strongly Agree	
Feedback Feedback is provided to employees in order to stay on track.	1 2 3 4 5	
Recognition Employees receive appropriate recognition for their contributions and efforts.	1 2 3 4 5	
Relationships Management encourages relationship between management and employees.	1 2 3 4 5	
Management encourages relationship among members in the same department.	1 2 3 4 5	
Management encourages relationship among employees in different departments.	1 2 3 4 5	

Personal Data

Position:

Department:

Working Period at Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel:

Working Period in Hotel Business: